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S P E E C H

— OF —

GEORGE F. HOAR,

— AT THE —

State Republican Convention

— OF —

MASSACHUSETTS,

Sept. 19, 1877.

Our duty, today, is simple and honorable. We are commissioned to designate a fitting successor to that line of illustrious magistrates to whom, by annual election, the people of this state have entrusted their executive power from the days of Winthrop and Bradford, with a single interval, until the present hour. I hope the events of recent years have cured us of a spirit of boasting. But if any man be inclined to question the capacity of an educated people for self-government, he is invited to compare the roll of popular governors of Massachusetts with those who were placed over her by royal authority during the period of the provincial government, or with the succession of occupants of any throne, or the prime ministers of any European state from 1620 until today.

But we have other than mere state interests. We have duties whose importance is not measured by state lines. The time has its own questions which concern the people of the whole country. The people of the whole country look with interest for the opinions of the republicans of Massachusetts.

We have lately passed through a season of great difficulty and peril. It is, I think, the first time in history that a serious question of title to the supreme executive power in any nation has been settled otherwise than by force. After a presidential contest of unparalleled earnestness, in which, in large sections of the country, the entire population almost seemed divided into two hostile camps, it turned out that to determine the result required the decision of the gravest questions of constitutional law, concerning which the two political parties and the two houses of congress differed irreconcileably. There existed no tribunal or arbiter authorized to decide between them. Unless such a tribunal could be created it is difficult to see how the country could have escaped the most serious convulsions. The power to determine all these questions had been claimed for the president of the senate. But that power was not only denied by the majority of the house, but a majority of the republicans in the

senate were committed against it. If it had been asserted and supported by a majority in the senate, it cannot be doubted that one person would have been declared elected by the senate, while another person would have been elected and declared entitled to his office by the house. The outgoing president, the heads of departments, the senate, and the governments of the great republican states would have recognized one claimant, while the other would have been recognized and supported by the new house of representatives, the solid south and the executives of the great northern states of New York, Connecticut, New Jersey and Indiana. In other words, we should have had a controversy as to the great vital question, who was entitled to obedience and recognition as president of the United States, a controversy not between section and section, not between the Union and some of the states, but a controversy separating men by party lines, and extending through the entire country. The house of representatives, in anticipation of this conflict, would doubtless have refused to pass any appropriations which could be used in support of an administration whose title it denied. I do not say that the good sense of the American people would not have found some escape from this condition of things other than through civil war, with its certain destruction of credit, industry and property, and its probable destruction of the republic itself. But I do say that no other escape from these things was suggested or devised so far as I know, except that which was in fact adopted. It is highly to the credit of both political parties that amid the excitements and passions of the hour a peaceful and lawful solution was attained.

The decision of the electoral commission must be approved or condemned by the American people and by history according to their ultimate judgment of the soundness of the interpretation of the constitution on which it rests. Any decision must have occasioned the deepest disappointment to the losing party. It is natural that for the time this disappointment

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should find expression in bitter complaint and in unjust and angry charges against political opponents. Unhappily, like charges are not new in our political history. Probably, a majority of the American people believed for a time that John Quincy Adams obtained the presidency by a corrupt bargain with Mr. Clay. Andrew Jackson professed himself so assured of this bargain that he refused to extend to his predecessor the ordinary courtesies of social life. The pure fame of Mr. Adams has long survived the calumny which the disappointed democracy of his time poured out upon his name. The calumny is only to be remembered for the lesson which it teaches to distrust judgments formed and colored by the bitterness of personal disappointment or party defeat.

During the campaign there came from three of the southern states complaints that armed minorities were conspiring to overcome by force and fear the resistance of the majority, and so take lawless possession of their state governments and of their electoral colleges; that public meetings of republicans were surrounded by bands of mounted and armed ruffians, striking terror alike into speaker and hearer, while prominent republicans were marked for secret assassination. These charges derived probability from occurrences like the massacre at Hamburg, too notorious to be concealed or misunderstood, from the Mississippi campaign of 1874, and the terrible annals of Louisiana with their story of blood and crime from 1866 down to the present year.

Soon as the campaign was over, complaints came from the other side that the officials charged by these states with the duty of counting the votes and declaring the result had conspired to defeat the will of the people and declare the result falsely. Gentlemen high in the confidence of the two parties went to the disputed states to watch the count of the votes. When congress met, each of the two branches sent committees to make investigation. In every instance the republican majority of the committees of the senate reported to that body that the states to which they were sent had been carried by the republicans, the democratic minority dissenting. In every instance, the democratic majority of the committees of the house reported to that body that the disputed states had been carried by the democrats, the republican minority dissenting. There was in some cases even more than difference of opinion as to the result of the evidence. The minority charged upon their associates in the Louisiana committee the design and purpose to prevent a full investigation into the crimes committed in some of the parishes, and a refusal to take or to report evidence needful to a fair determination of the true result of the election in that state.

Now, unpleasant as the fact may be, who can doubt that the result of all this would have been that, with scarce an exception, republicans would have taken the republican, and democrats the democratic side, of these questions. The republican senate, whenever it acted, would have sustained the report of the republican committee. The democratic house, whenever it acted, would have acted in accordance with the report of its democratic committee.

I make the statement in no partisan spirit. It is a confession humiliating to us as Americans, humiliating to human nature itself, to say that with the single exception of Reverdy Johnson, the democrat has not yet been found, who in the presence of the clearest evidence of murder or other outrage wrought for political ends by those of his own party, has either condemned it, endeavored to punish it, refused to

profit by it, or even been willing to report it honestly.

Under these circumstances, the two houses united in creating the electoral commission, expressly referring to them the question whether any power existed in congress to overturn or go behind the decision of the state officers as to the choice of electors. This question was not only carefully stated and referred to the commission in the act itself, which gave to the commission only "such powers as congress possesses, if any," but was declared by Judge Thurman of Ohio, a democratic member of the committee which framed the bill, not to be decided by the bill, but left to the commission. Nothing but the most intense strain of party excitement and necessity could ever have induced the democrats to assert such power. It had been earnestly denied in debate in the senate, within a year before the election, by Messrs. Thurman and Bayard, two of their most distinguished leaders in the senate, as it has been since the decision of the commission by Chief Justice Church of New York, their most distinguished living jurist.

The commission held that the power of deciding who had been duly chosen electors was in the states. They held that the votes of such persons were to be counted as the tribunal chosen for that purpose in each state had declared to have been duly appointed its electors. They held that congress had no authority on pretense or suggestion of mistake, misconduct, fraud or any other ground whatever to usurp the power to determine who had been chosen electors in any state, or to reverse or overturn on any pretense whatever the state's decision by its own constituted tribunal.

We did not hold, as is sometimes represented, that the certificate of the certifying officer, governor or secretary, or whoever else he may be, was conclusive. But the determination of the tribunal itself, constituted by the state for that purpose, is binding upon all other authority. Just as the judgment of the supreme court of the United States, in cases within the jurisdiction given it by the constitution, is conclusive, and no man can be heard anywhere to controvert it, or to impute that the judges misconducted or erred through mistake or by fraudulent design, so the judgment of the state, rendered at the time prescribed, and before the electors vote, is final upon the title of the electors. The clerk of the supreme court might fraudulently or by mistake wrongfully certify as to what the record of its judgment showed. So the secretary or governor of a state might wrongfully certify as to the contents or effect of the record of the judgment of its returning board, and that wrong certificate may be corrected by the real judgment. This is the simple principle which the commission applied to all the disputed states, to Florida, to Louisiana, to South Carolina, to Oregon.

Upon the soundness of this doctrine I am willing to risk whatever title I have to the respect of my fellow-citizens now or hereafter. I have one thing to say to our democratic brethren: If any democratic statesman, fairly representing the opinions of his party, with any regard for his character or with any character to regard; if any democratic convention commissioned to utter the opinions of the democracy of the country will in any formal and authentic way plant itself upon a denial of the doctrine applied by the commission, I think the republicans will be willing to join them in taking the sense of the American people, whether the president is henceforth to be chosen, as the constitution requires, by electors whose title to cast their vote is determined by the states for whom

they act, or whether, on the other hand, the right to the presidential office is to be decided by a party vote, like a contested election case in the house of representatives.

The wise heads of the democratic party skillfully avoid a position so repugnant to the constitution and so opposed to their own traditions, opinions and future interests. They content themselves by saying with loud outcry and clamor that the republican party owes its victory to fraud in three of the states. The charge rests upon no basis whatever, except the reports of prejudiced committees, who close their eyes to the methods by which the will of the people of those states, republican by large majorities, was obstructed in its true expression, an expression which their state boards had alone authority to ascertain and declare.

The people of Massachusetts are happily agreed by a large majority of both parties in desiring an early return to specie payments. Under the operation of the resumption law of 1876, defective as that statute is, the greenback now fluctuates within from five to three per cent of an equality with gold. The secretary of the treasury expresses his certain conviction that with the means at his command, if no adverse legislation be had, he will be able to resume specie payments by the 1st of January, 1879. I believe with him that until the resumption of specie payments be assured "there will be no new enterprises involving great sums, no active industries, but money will be idle and watch and wait the changes that may be made before we reach the specie standard."

The great fame of Mr. Webster as an orator and constitutional lawyer has eclipsed his title to regard as a clear and profound reasoner on currency and finance. I believe him to have been one of the highest authorities we have ever had in this country on these subjects. He declared in Boston, late in life, that during his whole political career, ever since the time of his coming into congress thirty years before, he had devoted himself in preference to all other topics to the study of the finances of the country.

He never uttered a sentence which better deserved to take its place among the accepted axioms of government than these:

"The prosperity of the working classes lives, moves and has its being in established credit and a steady medium of payment." * * *

"When that fluid in the human system indispensable to life becomes disordered, corrupted or obstructed in its circulation, not the head or the heart alone suffers, but the whole body—head, heart and hand, all the members and all the extremities—is affected with debility, paralysis, numbness and death. The analogy between the human system and the social and political system is complete; and what the life blood is to the former, circulation, money, currency is to the latter; and if that be disordered or corrupted, paralysis must fall on the system."

But while the folly of an irredeemable currency has been always clearly seen by the Yankee sagacity of New England and the commercial experience of New York without regard to party lines, there are other parts of the country in which different theories have prevailed. Some of our brethren in the far west have been disposed to impute the New England desire for a return to specie payment to the supposed fact that the accumulated capital of the east is in the hands of money lenders, who selfishly desire to increase the value of the debts due from debtor states, at the expense of the debtor, or to the influence of speculators in bonds or bullion.

No greater mistake was ever made. Speculators who gamble in the stock market or the

gold market find their best harvest in the fluctuations which end when a uniform and stable currency is established. The savings of our working classes are largely invested in savings banks whose funds are in government bonds and other forms of credit. But the class of mere lenders of money as distinguished from workmen or business men whose capital is invested in productive enterprise, is not very large, and is by no means influential in making up the political opinion of the people of New England.

The business man and the laborer of the east have the same interests, are embarked in the same boat, must seek success by the same methods as those of the rest of the country. They must find it, and find it alone in the prosperity of the rest of the country.

The East, New England, Massachusetts, possess capital, skilled labor, a full population, institutions of education, admirable political constitutions, an honorable history full of stimulant memories. What Massachusetts wants—the one thing needful to her complete prosperity—is a prosperous west and a prosperous south. She desires that the safe and steady maxims of business, that the stable currency, life-blood of trade, that the jealous care for credit which, in her own prosperity, have borne such abundant fruit, may bring forth a still larger harvest on their wider and more fertile fields.

Without a stable currency, resting upon a specie basis, there can be neither safety in credit, nor any certain measure for exchange. Bold and reckless speculation alternates with timidity, paralysis and stagnation. Débits, public and private, recklessly contracted, are regarded only as a burden, never as an obligation. The sentiments of honor and honesty are eliminated from business. Public and private credit cease to be among the resources of the republic.

"The wise merchant," says the great philosopher of our day, "by truth in his dealings can use in turn as he wants it, all the property in the world." What powers are in the hands of these great property owners, the people of the northwest and the southwest and the south, with their mighty rivers and lakes waiting for commerce, their timberlands, their infinite corn fields and cotton fields, their sugar and rice, their mines of gold and silver and coal, let but this one thing be established.

A kindred error, as it seems to me, to that which would carry on the business of the country with irredeemable paper, is that which would lower and make uncertain the standard of value by rendering silver a legal tender to all amounts. There is some plausibility to the argument that as the public debt is payable, principal and interest, in coin, the government which must have borne the loss if gold and silver both had risen in value by some unexpected cause, is fairly entitled to the benefit if one of the metals be cheapened by a largely increased supply. I should be slow to admit this argument, even if the creditor and the government were alone concerned. Silver was at best but a subsidiary coin used for payments of small amounts only, and never contemplated by either party as the medium of payment of any considerable sum. It would be a sharp and hard advantage, hardly worthy of a great government, to get a forced discount on its liability by avail itself of this unexpected cheapening of the subsidiary coin. It would be quite as dignified and honorable to pay off the creditor in copper.

But the chief objection to the monetization of silver is its effect on the currency. There are persons who seem always striving to provide for the American people the worst money that

they can persuade them to receive. If they will not accept that which is absolutely worthless, then at least give them the most worthless possible. They were never heard urging the adoption of silver as money until the late addition to the supply cheapened that metal as compared with gold, and they do not now advocate it except at a rate which will lower the value of the dollar.

The tendency of the great commercial nations of the world is to the adoption of gold as the exclusive standard of value. To give silver a place in the currency of the United States by making it a tender for all amounts will cause a large influx of silver to this country where alone among first-class nations it will have value as money, while gold will be drained to those countries where it is in demand as the sole standard. Silver will then become a drug in our markets and gold become scarce. If the recent increase of supply from our mines shall be maintained, its value will still further be reduced, the stability of the currency, which by the resumption of specie payment should be attained, be destroyed, and the value of what will be practically one only medium of exchange fluctuate in accordance with the price of shares in some Comstock lode or Big Bonanza.

There has been no time for thirty-five years, when the most prominent theme of political discussion has not been the relation and duty of the American people toward the colored population of the south. The annexation of Texas, the war with Mexico, the admission of California, the fugitive slave law, the repeal of the Missouri compromise, the attempt to force slavery on Kansas, the election of Lincoln, the rebellion, the enlistment of colored troops, the proclamation of emancipation, the three last amendments to the constitution, the readmission of the seceding states, the kakuz legislation,—all these have been either the efforts of the white people of the south to strengthen or to extend the institution which subjected the negro to their uncontrolled will, or efforts of the people of the north, on the other hand, to perform or to escape the duty to this class of their countrymen, which justice and the law of God, under the most terrible penalties, demanded at their hands. If any man be inclined to lose faith, or lose heart, if any man doubt on which side are the permanent and prevailing forces, if any man—I would speak it reverently—doubt on which side is the power that has built this fabric of things, let him compare the condition of the negro race today with its condition in 1842. Then the constitutions of the nation and of half the states, the decisions of the highest courts, the interest of trade and manufacture, the public sentiment of the whole country, stronger than constitutions or statutes, were millstones about his neck, sinking him, as it seemed, into the fathomless depths of a hopeless and endless slavery.

I think in that very year, Prudence Crandall was in jail in Connecticut for teaching a colored child to read.

Today the colored man is a freeman, a citizen, a voter, a holder of office, a land owner. The schools are open to his children. His right to all these things is secured by the Constitution of the United States and of every state, by the resolutions of both political parties, by the opinions of one of the great parties of the country, and by the professions, at least, and most solemn pledges of the leaders of the other. I do not doubt that there is still grave and serious danger. There are men, able and numerous at the south, who mean, having first driven out from their states all white men who differ from them, to deprive the negro of the political and

legal rights conferred on him by the amendments to the constitution, and to reduce him to such a condition of political and personal dependence upon the whites, that the will of the latter shall be the law which determines his personal rights, and fixes the price and condition of his labor. This is partly a conscious purpose, and partly the effect of that curious mental hallucination which, while persuading itself of a desire to treat the colored man with justice, seems to lose unconsciously all understanding of what justice and equality really are wherever he is concerned. There are still men at the north willing to buy power and office by pandering to these designs. The breed of doughfaces is not extinct. But these evil purposes cannot now be brought to pass without a revolution, every step in whose progress is not only a moral but a legal crime, whose success must bring with it not only the practical overthrow of the constitution, but personal dishonor to the men whose solemn pledges it violates.

I do not stand here to advise you to relax anything of your watchfulness to preserve the field you have won. Without constant and perpetual vigilance nothing in a republic is secure. But to be afraid that, in spite of it, these designs will be successful, is to despair of the republic itself.

The mode in which President Hayes has dealt with the southern problem, as it is called, during the first six months of his term of office, excites, as is natural, deep solicitude and earnest discussion. It is his great good fortune, that to a degree almost without an example, both friends and opponents accord to him the praise of perfect honesty of purpose. By a solemn declaration he has put it out of his power to be a candidate for re-election. He can have no other ambition than to earn the approbation of his countrymen by the purest and highest public service. He has made no other complete statement of the principles which will govern his administration than that contained in the platform adopted at Cincinnati and his letter of acceptance, both of which are well known and satisfactory to those who voted for him.

No man is more thoroughly pledged than President Hayes to uphold the constitutional rights and the constitutional equality of all citizens of the United States. To this his record of civil and military service and his official pledges alike bind him fast. In all his public utterances since he came into office he has insisted on this as fundamental. Indeed, that every voter in the country shall be protected in the rights conferred by the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments by every exertion of national power necessary to that end, is not matter of executive discretion or legislative discretion, it is constitutional duty, which neither president nor legislator sworn to support the constitution can rightfully disregard.

The executive action of the president has been the subject of severe criticism in three particulars.

He has refused to use the military forces to maintain the governments of Chamberlain in South Carolina, and Packard in Louisiana.

He has appointed a southern democrat, formerly a high officer in the confederate army, to a seat in the cabinet.

He has manifested in his personal and official bearing a temper and spirit of friendliness and confidence toward the southern whites.

The refusal to use the military forces of the United States to keep in power the governments of Chamberlain and Packard seems to me to have been a constitutional necessity. The constitution provides that "no appropriation of money for the use of the army shall be for a

longer period than two years." It was intended by this language to enable congress to determine the uses to which the military force of the country should be put, by an opportunity to act upon the question of their support at least once in the term of every house of representatives, and the statute authority to the president to call out the militia and employ the land and naval forces must be interpreted in the light of that provision. The late house of representatives had refused appropriations for the army unless the bill should contain an express prohibition of such exertion of military force, to which the senate refusing its consent, the supplies for the army were withheld altogether. A new house of representatives had been chosen who, as every well informed man knows, would adhere to the action of its predecessor. The duty of determining what policy shall permanently control the use of the military forces of the United States rests with congress. The duty of deciding who shall be recognised as the true government of a state, under the decision of the supreme court rests also with congress. The president might, indeed, for a few weeks have lawfully maintained the governments of South Carolina and Louisiana in the state houses to which they were confined. But whenever his right to use the army or his lawful resources for its supply ended, those governments must have fallen.

But the president's action does not find its vindication in necessity alone. He has done something more and quite different from the abandonment of force, simply because force became, for the time, impossible. He has sought to meet in a spirit of confidence and friendship the assurances of prominent southern men of a ~~cause~~, on their part, to support, in good faith, hereafter, the results of the war and the whole amended constitution. Those who find faint with this policy overlook, it seems to me, the consideration how narrow are the limits in which mere force, or law speaking only through its punishments, have their domain. The offenses of individuals, having no public sentiment in their support and not stimulated by sectional or party spirit, are easily suppressed. But at the end of a great civil war, where the education and habits of thought of generations, where the pride of state and race, and the spirit of party inflame the evil, other instrumentalities must effect the cure.

I do not utter these opinions now, for the first time. It was my duty two years ago to visit the state of Louisiana, as a member of the committee of the house of representatives, to investigate the disorders in that state. In the report which it was my office to write, but which derives added weight from the signatures of Vice President Wheeler and Mr. Frye of Maine, the committee say:

"This great movement of the public mind in great states is not to be dealt with as if it were a street riot. You cannot change great currents of public sentiment or the habits of thought and feeling of great bodies of men by act of congress. In a republic you cannot long or permanently check their manifestation by the exercise of national power."

I have little respect for weak and gushing platitudes. But when the president of the United States, in his own person one of the best types of that citizen soldiery which subdued the rebellion, and by his office the representative alike of the loyalty and the authority of the country, deems that the fitting time to extend the right hand has come, the effort at harmony must not fail for want of the hearty support of the republicans of Massachusetts.

The president also has acted wisely in invit-

ing the co-operation in his administration of a distinguished democrat of the south, honored by his own party and section, who accepts and supports in good faith all the results of the war. In not deeming a share in the rebellion reason for perpetual exclusion from public office of those who accept honestly and heartily these results, President Hayes but follows the example set by Gen. Grant in the cases of Attorney General Akerman and Gen. Longstreet. The great victory of the Union arms was achieved, not to make the men of the south dependents, but only equals; not to bring them to your feet, but only to your side. You conquered only to achieve a fuller and more perfect union; not that you might have vassal states or subject citizens.

It is to be asked, the other day, in this hall, if it is to be tolerated that a Union and a rebel general should be seen standing together on the same platform. I answer, yes, if that platform be made up of the unity of the republic and the three amendments to the constitution.

The platform adopted at Cincinnati, and the letter of acceptance of President Hayes following the earlier example of the Massachusetts republican state convention of 1873, pledged the incoming administration to attempt the overthrow of a gigantic threefold evil. The civil service of the country has taken three successive downward steps since the inauguration of Andrew Jackson in 1829. For the first forty years of the government, although party feeling burned with a fierceness of which in our favored state today we have little conception, there were few removals from office, and those for cause in no way connected with political opinion. Andrew Jackson inaugurated the system of removal for mere opinion, an example which has been followed by all his successors. This was the first downward step.

Nowhere in the constitution is power expressly given to the president to remove civil officers. The construction which originally conceded it to President Washington, only prevailed on a tie vote in the senate by the casting vote of John Adams. It has been denied by many of our ablest statesmen, both in early and later times. But the weight of the argument is in its favor. A practice unbroken for nearly fourscore years has firmly established the power, to which what remains of the tenure of office act will be but a slight impediment. But the generation which framed the constitution never dreamed that the president would remove faithful public officers on account of their opinions. Mr. Madison declared that such an act would be sufficient cause for the impeachment and removal from office of the president himself.

The evil—fruit of this seed—can hardly be overstated. It excludes from the service of the people all good men, no matter what their title to respect or gratitude, unless they agree in opinion with the dominant party. It puts constraint on the freedom of thought and action of large numbers of our most active citizens. It places all the office holders of the country, now more than sixty-two thousand in number, who should be, and commonly are, among our most efficient and intelligent citizens, in the degrading position of being compelled to agree in opinion with the president in all the new and shifting phases of politics on pain of loss of subsistence by themselves and their families. It has been well said that if Warren had been among the living he could not have held office without a party collar about his neck. The offices created to serve the people, under the operation of this rule, are used only to bribe them. Office and honors are given as rewards for political service and not for merit. Political service in its turn is given only for reward.

But the worst evil of a partisan civil service is not its immediate injury to officials or people. It tends to inflame and increase that party spirit against which Washington, in his farewell address, warns us as the one greatest danger to our country. The warning against that sentiment, so fruitful of danger, called party spirit, is not a warning against party itself. Parties are honorable, useful, necessary. They are old as liberty, old as government, older than history. Party should be the union of men, connected by no other band than that of honest, unbought opinion as to what is for the interest of the state to carry that opinion into political effect in its administration. The evil of party spirit is that it transfers to that association a love, allegiance and obedience due only to the state itself. Now what must be the effect in inflaming this spirit to have nearly one-half of the people continue for a generation to feel that they are excluded from all share in the government by reason of their opinion, even from those functions which their opinions do not affect. To them the government becomes only the representative of their antagonists. It is, to their minds, only organized party. Every act of its necessary authority is viewed as the act of an enemy. Its victories in war, its most successful and beneficent administration in peace, are regarded with jealousy and dislike, as tending to prolong the rule of foes, and perpetuate their own exclusion from power.

The holders of office, appointed as a reward for political service, tend naturally to become a compact and disciplined cohort, exerting a powerful influence upon the political action of the rest of the people. This is the second downward step. They are expected to give time, and be subject to assessments of money for the service of the party. The whole people, without distinction of party, is thus taxed to support body of men for the service of the party. This second evil is none the less real and formidable because it has been sometimes exaggerated, or because there are localities to which its influence has not reached. I have no faith in Mr. Calhoun's prophecy that when the number of holders of office shall reach one hundred thousand it will be impossible for the American people to dislodge from power the governing party which has such a band at its service. The temper of the American people must be radically changed if such an influence does not generate a resisting power ample for its overthrow. Certainly in that part of Massachusetts in whose service my own official life has for eight years been spent no such influence has been ever exerted. I do not believe the people of Worcester county differ in that respect from the majority of the people of Massachusetts. The holders of federal and state offices have been men of intelligence and worth who have never violated the proprieties of their place. The proportion of them who have been active politicians has been no greater than the proportion of such politicians among the citizens at large. The small number of them who have been leaders in politics would have taken the same place if their party had been out of power or they themselves had held no office. A new element has been introduced, under republican rule, which has largely diminished this special evil, as compared with democratic administrations since the days of Jackson. That element is the recognition of the superior title of the citizen soldier, who rendered service to his country in the hour of her peril to every civil opportunity. But our own party is not faultless in this regard. I have no doubt that under the administration of Grant this evil has been felt heavily in parts of the country, especially in the large commercial cities. I have no doubt that if this weapon be

not now cast aside it will hereafter in unscrupulous hands become dangerous to liberty. Our ablest and wisest statesmen, from Washington to Sumner, have uttered abundant warnings against the two evils I have described. If I were to undertake to cite them I should detain you till the sun went down.

A third downward step, of still worse public consequence, has been taken since the victory of congress in its controversy with Andrew Johnson. From the feeble hands of Johnson, contending against the victorious loyalty of the country represented by a two-thirds majority in both branches, congress, for the safety of the public, deemed itself compelled to wrest a portion of the executive power. It was a measure deemed necessary in a time of public danger, which should have been abandoned when the danger was over. There grew up in congress a claim, not merely that its members should be respected and consulted like other citizens, in executive appointments, but of a right to dictate those appointments to the president and heads of department. The result soon was that in many cases these appointments were used by members of congress as patronage for their own personal advantage. As President Hayes well says, "The offices in these cases become not merely rewards for party services, but rewards for services to party leaders." Where this practice obtains, each senator or representative surrounds himself, at the public expense, with a band of adherents devoted to his personal fortunes. This power, we all know, may be very much abused, and become a public scandal in the hands of an adroit, unscrupulous, self-seeking representative.

I desire to quote in this connection, after the presidential election, a few sentences which I uttered before.

But the evil is greater yet when the claim is made by the senator, and when it is supported by an understanding among senators that no appointment shall be confirmed to which the senator from the state to which it relates objects, and no appointment rejected, except in rare cases, which that senator has advised. From this understanding have proceeded many of those appointments to office, especially in the south, which have met the public disapprobation. Instead of the question concerning candidates to office, "Is he honest, is he capable, is he faithful to the constitution?" instead, even, of the question, "Is he faithful to the principles of the republican party?" is the question, "Is he faithful to the senator?" I have heard this unconstitutional and corrupting practice defended as if it were but an exchange of offices of friendship, honorable alike to giver and receiver. That is a strange friendship in which two parties, at no cost to themselves, exchange benefits at the expense of the people, and mark their gratitude to each other by generous gifts from the public treasury.

Certainly no republican, aspiring to purity in government, can be inexcusable to the dishonor of using the powers conferred by the people and intended only for their advantage, to purchase or to repay private benefits, or the promotion of personal ambition—a principle only surpassed in baseness by that which would use the same powers for the gratification of personal revenge.

Under this system, which I have described but imperfectly, the honorable service of the republic, which should be the noblest of human avocations, becomes degraded to an infamous bargain. The separation between the executive and legislative departments, on which the constitution of our own commonwealth lays such stress, "to the end that it may be a government

of laws and not of men," is overthrown. The executive power which the constitution confers upon an officer chosen by the people, is transferred to a body representing states in which Delaware and New York have an equal voice. Responsibility rests in one place; actual power in another. The president and heads of departments become dependent upon congress; congress in its turn becomes dependent on the president.

To overthrow this threefold evil, the republicans of Massachusetts and the Union are solemnly engaged. The republicans of Massachusetts in their platform of 1873, denounced the undue interference of federal officers in elections, and demanded of the president that "public offices should be hereafter used to serve the people and not to bribe them." The republicans of the whole country, by their representatives at Cincinnati, asked the votes of the people on the distinct promise that

"The inviolable rule in appointments should have reference to the honesty, fidelity and capacity of the appointees, giving to the party in power those places where harmony and vigor of administration require its policy to be represented, but permitting all others to be filled by persons selected with sole reference to the efficiency of the public service, and the right of all citizens to share in the honor of rendering faithful service to the country."

To this promise Gov. Hayes responded, "The resolutions are in accord with my views, and I heartily concur in the principles they announce."

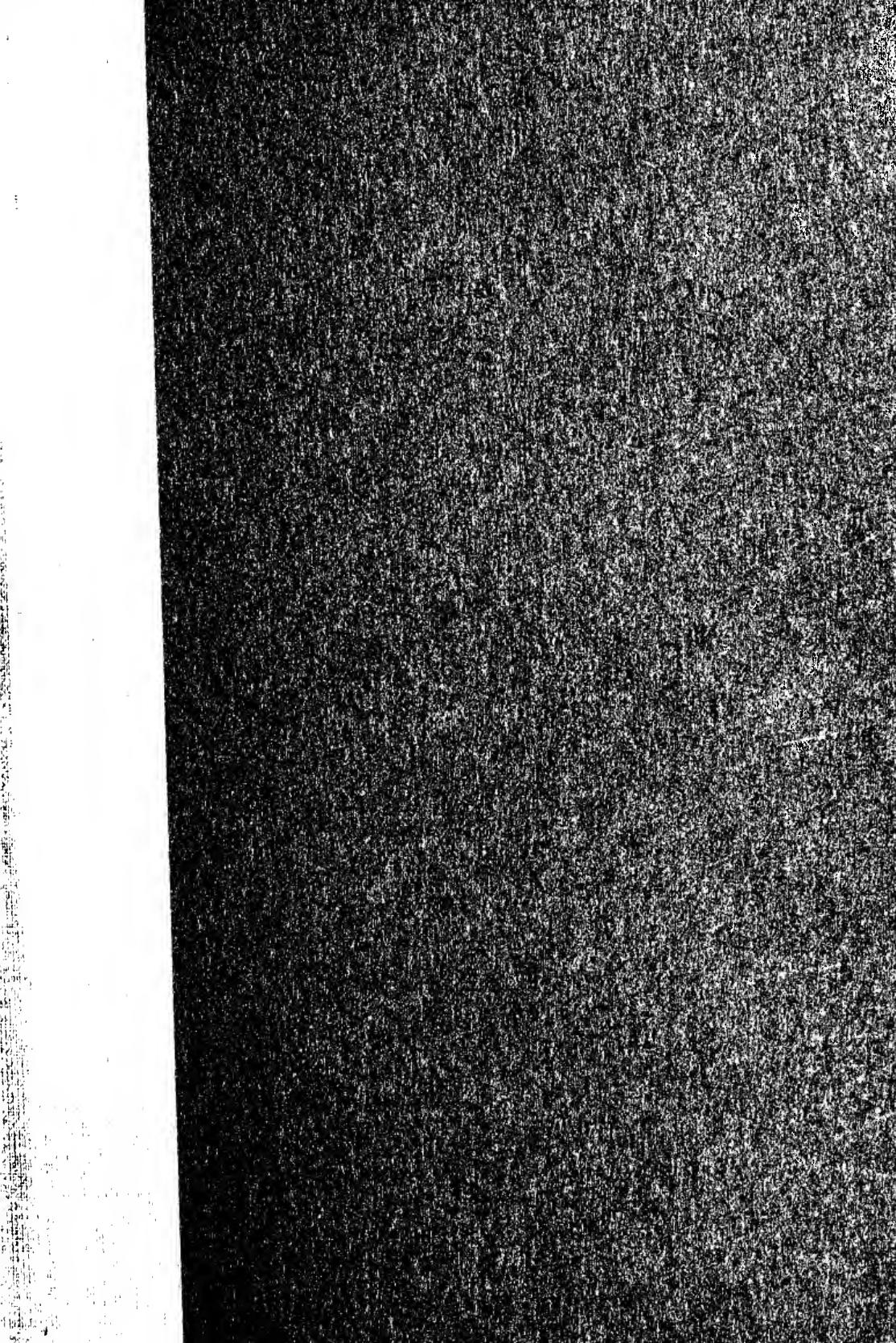
"The fifth resolution adopted by the convention is of paramount interest. More than forty years ago a system of making appointments to office grew up based upon the maxim "to the victors belong the spoils." The old rule—the true rule, that honesty, capacity and fidelity constitute the only real qualifications for office, and that there is no other claim, gave place to the idea that party services were to be chiefly considered. All parties in practice have adopted this system. It has been essentially modified since its first introduction; it has not, however, been improved. At first the president, either directly or through the heads of the departments, made all the appointments, but gradually the appointing power in many cases passed into the control of members of congress. The offices in these cases have become not merely rewards for party services, but rewards for services to party leaders. This system destroys the independence of the separate departments of the government. It leads directly to extravagance and official incapacity. It is a temptation to dishonesty. It binders and injures that careful supervision and strict accountability by which alone faithful and efficient public service can be secured. It obstructs the prompt removal and sure punishment of the unworthy. In every way it degrades the civil service and the character of the government. It is felt, I am confident, by a large majority of the members of congress, to be an intolerable burden and an unwarrantable hindrance to the proper discharge of their legitimate duties. It ought to be abolished. The reform should be thorough, radical and complete. We should return to the principles and practice of the founders of the government, supplying by legislation, when needed, that which was formerly established custom. They neither expected nor desired from public officers any partisan service. They meant that public officers should owe their whole service to the government and to the people. They meant that the officer should be secure in his tenure as long as his personal character remained untarnished and the performance of his duties satisfactory.

If elected I shall conduct the administration of the government upon these principles, and all constitutional powers vested in the executive will be employed to establish this reform."

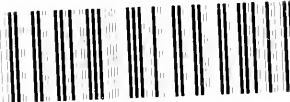
Unless we would be dishonored, we must support the president in his efforts to fulfill these pledges. The republican party cannot afford to make pledges before the election to be abandoned afterward, or make lofty declarations of principle, to which its conduct shall give the lie. You would not willingly exhibit the spectacle of that democracy which assembled here last week, whose first resolution proclaimed its hostility to alleged frauds committed with respect to elections in the south, and whose last resolution demands the repeal of laws passed in Massachusetts, which are the only obstacle to its own committing them here.

It is said that, in adopting this policy, the republican party throws away a weapon for its defence which its opponents will use against it whenever they get opportunity. But this surely is no objection, if the weapon be not lawful and honorable. The republican party desires no advantage from a practice injurious to the public interest. It is said that no party can maintain itself in this country which does not rely on its holders of office to conduct its campaigns, to defray its charges, and to do the work of its organization. History refutes this argument. The parties in the days of our early presidents showed no lack of zeal or energy. We do not complain of any want of energy in our democratic opponents, who for sixteen years in the nation, and except for brief periods for fifty years in Massachusetts, have been excluded from office. No great cause, in making its way to the hearts and consciences of mankind, has found the aid of holders of office essential. When Matthew became an apostle he ceased to sit at the receipt of customs.

In these remarks, I have spoken my own views on the questions of the hour, imperfectly, but frankly as becomes a republican speaking to republicans. They, of course, bind no man except as they approve themselves to his own judgment. In seeking to divorce the civil offices of the country from mere party service, do not deem that I fall into that cant of the doctrinaire of which we hear so much in the early summer which speaks with arrogant and ignorant scorn of the party, the politician and the caucus. Such sentiments ridiculous anywhere, would be doubly unbecoming here. Party, in a free state, is that mechanism, by which, in administration, public opinion becomes effective in government. In opposition, it is the zealous watchman of power. The politician—the honest politician—is that citizen who of all others best does his duty to his country in times of civil struggle. Without his marshaling of political forces, civil contests must be carried on by mobs and not by parties. The caucus and American liberty are twin sisters. They were born in the same city and in the same hour. They were rocked in the same cradle. Sam Adams and Paul Revere and James Otis were the inventors of the caucus. Our fathers put into the constitution of the state by the pen of John Adams, that clause of the bill of rights which declares that "the right of the people to assemble in a peaceable and orderly manner to consult together for the public good," shall be held sacred, with direct reference to the political caucus; and this was so declared by that great jurist and statesman, Chief Justice Shaw, in one of his greatest constitutional judgments. It is an office worthy of the republicans of Massachusetts—lineal successors of Adams and Otis—to add to their great achievements in the cause of constitutional liberty the restoration to their original purity of those great instrumentalities, to which that liberty has owed so much.



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